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Semiconductor companies and excellence in communications

Pragati Grover
San Jose State University

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Grover, Pragati, M.S.

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SEMICONDUCTOR COMPANIES

AND

EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS

A Thesis Presented to

the Faculty of the

Department of Journalism and Mass Communications

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

By

Pragati Grover

May, 1992

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

AND MASS COMMUNICATIONS

Dennis L. Wilk

W.E. Biggs

Stephen L. W. Home

APPROVED FOR THE UNIVERSITY

Serena M. Stanford

ABSTRACT

SEMICONDUCTOR COMPANIES AND EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS

By Pragati Grover

This study focuses on the public relations activities of the 25 largest (by sales) high-technology companies in Santa Clara County, California. Mail questionnaires were used to determine if these companies were practicing excellence in public relations as outlined in Grunig's typology of public relations.

Many of the questions were adapted from a multi-year study, "Excellence in Public Relations and Communications Management," sponsored by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC). This study was conducted by a research team under the direction of Dr. James Grunig. The results of this study show that the sample organizations are not practicing excellence in public relations as predicted by the IABC research. This is because many high-technology companies are still maturing in organizational development because most of them are less than 20 years old. As these organizations mature and evolve in the coming years, it is theorized that their public relations activities will expand and become more sophisticated.

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CHAPTER I

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study attempts to determine whether high technology companies in the Silicon Valley practice what the International Association of Business Communicators "Excellence in Public Relations and Communications Management" study considers "excellence in communications." The IABC study is being used to determine the validity of the hypothesis. The hypothesis of this study is that these semiconductor companies should rank high on many of the IABC excellence study criteria, since they are organic, highly complex organizations in a highly competitive environment--the ones most likely to practice "excellence in communications," according to the IABC research study.

Grunig describes four models: press agency, public information, two-way asymmetrical, and two-way symmetrical models. In this descriptive, exploratory study, validity of Grunig's models in the largest 25 semiconductor companies in Santa Clara County was studied.

When Grunig and Hunt (1984) formulated the four models of public relations, they speculated about the extent to which organizations practice each of the models and about the kinds of organizations most likely to practice them.

They estimated that 50% of organizations practice public information, 20% two-way asymmetrical public relations, and 15% each press agency and two-way symmetrical public relations.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) also said they believed that press agency most often is practiced in sports, theatre, and product promotion. Grunig and Hunt thought that public information would be most common in government organizations but it also would be practiced by nonprofit organizations, associations, and many businesses. In addition, Grunig and Hunt thought that competitive businesses and public relations firms would practice the two-way asymmetrical model, and that regulated businesses and public relations firms would practice the two-way symmetrical model. According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), the ideal model is the two-way symmetric model in which practitioners serve as mediators between organizations and their publics.

This study examines whether Silicon Valley semiconductor corporations are practicing excellence in public relations by the nature of tasks they perform. This study addresses questions like: Do these companies subscribe to a symmetric or asymmetric model? Are these companies practicing sophisticated public relations?

There is no research available showing that such a study of the largest semiconductor companies in the Silicon Valley has previously been done. This study has tried to replicate the IABC study. Semiconductor companies in Silicon Valley were chosen as a sample for this study because such organizations according to the IABC research are most likely to practice two-way symmetrical communication. The contribution this study makes to the body of knowledge about high-tech organizations and their public relations practices should be beneficial to all students of organizations as well as to public relations scholars, teachers, and practitioners.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

To achieve the research purpose, a "model" of excellent public relations should be provided, and that model must be distinguished from other typical ways in which public relations is practiced. Grunig and Grunig (1990) use the term "model" for a simplified representation of reality as it is used in the sciences. Although all models are "false" in the sense that no representation can capture reality perfectly, we would have no understanding of reality at all if we had no model with which to work.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) call the four models: (1) the press agent/publicity model, (2) the public information model, (3) the two-way asymmetric model, and (4) the two-way symmetric model. These models have different objectives, generally are found in different organizational settings, and generally require different means of evaluating their success. The models help us to understand different stages in the history of public relations, because public relations seems to have passed through stages that resemble the four models.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) introduced four models of public relations to capture the enormous variation in public

relations practice and to reduce that variation to these four simplified representations. Grunig and Hunt (1984) acknowledged that there had been "public-relations-like activities" throughout history; they claimed that the press agents of the mid-nineteenth century were the first full-time specialists to practice public relations. The most prominent of these practitioners was P.T. Barnum, who skillfully promoted his circus performers.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984), a second model of public relations, the public information model, developed as a reaction to attacks on large corporations and government agencies by muckraking journalists. Although practitioners of the public information model generally chose to write only good things about their organizations, the information they did report generally was truthful and accurate. Grunig and Hunt identified Ivy Lee as the primary historical figure whose work characterized the public information model.

Both the press agentry and the public information models represent one-way approaches to public relations--the dissemination of information from organizations to publics, usually through the media. Beginning with the Creel Committee during World War I, however, some public relations practitioners began to base their work on the behavioral and

social sciences. Foremost among these practitioners was Edward L. Bernays.

The introduction of a scientific approach made the practice of public relations two-way: practitioners both sought information from and gave information to publics. Science also is based on theory, and the theories introduced by Bernays were those of propaganda, persuasion, and the "engineering of consent." Grunig and Hunt (1984) formulated the fourth model of public relations, the two-way symmetrical model, by analyzing the writings of practitioners such as Lee, Bernays, and John Hill. This model included "telling the truth," interpreting the client and public to one another," and "management understanding the viewpoints of employees and neighbors as well as employees and neighbors understanding the viewpoints of management" (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 23). Grunig and Hunt added, however, that few of these practitioners put such assumptions into practice and that it was public relations scholars and educators who took the practitioners at their word and made the model the basis of their research and teaching. Grunig and Hunt (1984), therefore, described the first two-way model of public relations as the two-way asymmetrical model.

Purpose of Public Relations

The models differ in purpose--the function they provide for the organization that sponsors them. Although public relations developed as a persuasive communication function, not all of these models use public relations for that purpose.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) believe that public relations serves as a propaganda function in the press agent/publicity model. Practitioners spread the faith of the organization involved, often through incomplete, distorted, or half-true information.

For the public information model, the purpose is the dissemination of information, not necessarily with a persuasive intent. The public relations person functions essentially as a journalist in residence, whose job it is to report objectively information about his organization to the public (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Practitioners of two-way asymmetric public relations, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984), have a function more like that of the press agent publicist, although their purpose can best be described as scientific persuasion. They use what is known from social science theory and research about attitudes and behavior to persuade publics to accept

the organization's point of view and to behave in a way that supports the organization. The press agent/publicist's attempt at persuasion, in contrast, is more intuitive, seat-of-the-pants rather than scientific.

In the two-way symmetric model, practitioners finally serve as mediators between organizations and their publics. Their goal is mutual understanding between organizations and their publics. These practitioners, too, may use social science theory and methods, but they usually use theories of communication rather than theories of persuasion for planning and evaluation of public relations (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Role of Public Relations in Four Organizational Types

Schneider's (1985) study examined how public relations is related to the typology of organizations. This typology, based on the two major dimensions of scale and complexity, was developed by Hage and Hull. Data collected by Grunig and analyzed in his 1976 Journalism Monograph were the basis for this secondary analysis.

Type I organizations, according to the Hage-Hull matrix (Schneider, 1985), are typically small-scale operations with low complexity, and are known as "traditional" or "craft" organizations. These organizations are characterized by

public relations practitioners who rarely counsel management about public opinion toward their organizations. Public relations activities and policy clearance process are more centralized than in other kinds of organizations; power and authority level are significantly lower.

Type 2, or "mechanical" organizations, are large-scale, low complexity structures that employ many people. Although they share a low knowledge base with Type I organizations, their very size should indicate the presence of a public relations department and its myriad activities. Type 3 organizations, called "organic" are small scale but characterized by high complexity. This is only one of the four types to place significantly less emphasis on holding press conferences and making formal contacts with journalists. Its public relations department is the smallest and perhaps that accounts for its lack of power within the organization (Schneider, 1985).

Type 4 organizations, of a mixed mechanical organic make-up, are large-scale, high-complexity operations that employ many people. Because they are characterized by product mix and accompanying mix of large and moderately sized market context, as well as shifting numbers of competitors, they would seem to have the greatest need for a large, comprehensive public relations program that reaches

outside of the organization itself. Public relations professionals in this setting do the least amount of writing of press releases. They spend more of their time, instead, in writing speeches, counseling management, holding press conferences and establishing formal connections with the news media (Schneider, 1985).

The Nature of Communication

The four models also demonstrate the nature of the communication that the public relations person manages between the organization and its publics. For the press agency/publicity and public information model, communication is always one-way from the organization to publics.

Grunig and Hunt (1984) noted that practitioners of these two models generally view communication as telling, not listening. The first two models differ, however, in that the press agent/publicists do not always feel obligated to present a complete picture of the organization or product they represent, whereas public information specialists do.

For the two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric practitioners, communication flows both to and from publics. But there is a big difference in the nature of that two-way communication. The two-way asymmetric model is "asymmetric"

because the effects of the public relations are imbalanced in favor of the organization. The organization does not change as a result of public relations; it attempts to change public attitudes and behavior.

Two-way asymmetric practitioners, according to Grunig and Hunt (1984), carefully plan what they communicate to publics to achieve maximum change in attitude and behavior. Communication from publics comes as "feedback." Many public relations practitioners today use feedback as a synonym for two-way communication. That was not its original meaning. In cybernetic theory, feedback is communication that helps a source control a receiver's behavior. Communication in this model is truly one-sided, or asymmetric.

In contrast, Grunig and Hunt (1984) believe the two-way symmetric model consists more of a dialogue than a monologue. If persuasion occurs, the public should be just as likely to persuade the organization's management to change attitudes or behavior as the organization is likely to change the publics' attitudes or behavior. Ideally, both management and publics will change somewhat after a public relations effort.

Do the Models Exist in the Real World?

Each of the four models of public relations could serve as a normative theory of public relations. They could tell a practitioner how to be a press agent or public information specialist, for example. Grunig and Grunig (1990) believe, however, that the two-way symmetrical model should be the normative model for public relations, that it describes how excellent public relations should be practiced. In addition, the four models also describe how public relations actually is practiced—that they are a positive (descriptive) theory of public relations. Positive theories describe phenomena, events, or activities as they actually occur.

Positive theories can be evaluated in part by whether they correspond to reality. If public relations is not practiced as described by the models, the models would not be a good positive theory. The evidence from research supports the conclusion that the four models provide a good positive theory; public relations practitioners do indeed practice all of them. Grunig and Grunig (1990) concluded that the relationship of the models to the environment of the organization functions more as a normative than positive theory.

Why do Organizations Practice the Four Models?

In much of the research on the models of public relations, a logical relationship between the structure and environment of an organization and the model or models it practices is found. This research began with Grunig (1976) and continued through studies reviewed in Grunig and Grunig (1989).

The research on why organizations practice the four models has followed trends in organizational sociology. Until recently, most organizational sociologists believed that organizations develop structures that are appropriate for their environments and their technology. Research has provided only minimal support for these structural and environmental theories--both in sociology and in the research on models of public relations. The least support for a relationship between environments and the models of public relations has come from studies that have used strictly empirical measures of environmental variables. Studies that have used qualitative observations of the environment of the organizations sampled have found a stronger relationship with the models, although that relationship still is relatively weak (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

Although Grunig and Grunig (1990) believe that organizations should practice two-way symmetrical communication when their environments are complex and turbulent, many if not most organizations with such environments do not practice public relations in the way Grunigs' theory predicted. They concluded, therefore, that the theoretical relationship between the models of public relations and an organization's environment and structure is more normative than positive.

To develop a positive theory, Grunig and Grunig turned to the power-control approach of explaining the behavior of organizations, which has become the dominant theory in organizational sociology. According to the power-control theory, organizations do what they do because a coalition of the most powerful people in that organization--the "dominant coalition"--chooses to do so. Three concepts seem to be important: the culture of the organization, the potential of the public relations department, and the "schema" for public relations in the organization.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture has a strong influence both on who holds power and on how the organization practices public relations. The relationship between culture and power seems to be circular; people in power develop the culture of an

organization and organizational culture influences who gains power (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

Differences in culture manifest themselves in the ways in which dominant coalition in an organization exercises power. Although an open-system style of management should work best for most organizations, most do not normatively use that system because the dominant coalition believes that it can maintain its power more easily through a closed system approach (Grunig, 1990). Such an approach includes asymmetrical communication. Concurrently, the dominant coalition typically believes that an open, symmetrical system threatens their power.

Potential of the Public Relations Department

According to Grunig's definition, public relations departments have more potential if they are headed by a manager rather than a technician. In addition, practitioners in the department--especially the senior person should have training and knowledge of the two-way symmetrical model. Men and women should have equal opportunity in the department. Research by Grunig and Grunig (1989) supports the proposition that the greater the potential of the public relations department, the more likely it will be that the senior person in the department will be in the dominant

coalition and the organization will practice the two-way symmetric model.

In 1986, Grunig and a team of researchers funded by the IABC Research Foundation set out to find what are the characteristics of an excellent public relations department. The team argued that excellent public relations departments will practice public relations in a way that is similar to the normative model, in contrast to the way that public relations is practiced in the typical, less excellent department.

According to the normative theory, organizational communication should be practiced strategically. An organization that practices public relations strategically develops programs to communicate with the publics, both external and internal, that provide the greatest threats to and opportunities for the organization (Grunig, 1990).

Organizations strive for good relationships with the publics in their external or internal environment that limit their ability to pursue their goals. Building good relationships with strategic publics maximizes the autonomy of organizations to pursue their goals, which is important because the literature shows that effective organizations

are those that choose appropriate goals and then have the autonomy to achieve them.

This study concluded that public relations seldom is practiced according to the principles of strategic management. Public relations professionals typically are not involved in strategic management until an issue occurs; they are not called in to help anticipate which publics might create issues and to communicate with those publics before issues occur. There is also a fragmentation of the communication function, especially in corporations. Many departments have responsibility for communication, and many organizations do not integrate the function. As a result, strategic planning for public relations is almost impossible (Grunig, 1990).

According to Grunig (1990) public relations cannot be effective unless the senior public relations person has power to affect organization decisions, either formally or informally. The data collected by Grunig suggests that public relations programs without power do not practice public relations strategically. Lack of power, therefore, seems to explain why few public relations programs are excellent.

Most of the CEOs surveyed see public relations as a process of negotiation and compromise, what Grunig (1990) calls the two-way symmetrical model of public relations, rather than as a process of press agentry, persuasion or manipulation.

The next conclusion relates to the role of the senior public relations person in an organization. Grunig's theory of excellence states that public relations departments should be headed by strategic communication managers rather than communication technicians. Most of the CEOs surveyed see the need for such a manager of public relations, but many don't seem to have one on staff (Grunig, 1990).

The final conclusion of this study relates to the role of women in public relations. Two-thirds or more of the students in university programs in public relations are women. They are the practitioners most likely to have the knowledge to practice excellent public relations as they mature in their careers. Thus, the researchers believe that excellent departments will take steps to enhance the career of women.

Schema for Public Relations

Several studies have reported positive correlations between the two-way symmetrical model and the extent to

which senior management supports and understands public relations or has formal training in public relations. These same variables correlate negatively with press agency and public information and significantly with the two-way asymmetrical model. These results suggest that the way in which senior managers define and understand public relations produces what Grunig calls a "schema" for public relations in the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

Gender of the Practitioner

Several feminist scholars of public relations have pointed out the similarity between the presuppositions of the two-way symmetric model--such as cooperation, negotiation, and compromise--and the characteristics of women. Wetherell conducted an extensive review of research on gender in the psychological and management literature, which supported the likelihood of a link between femininity and the two-way symmetrical model. Data from a national sample of practitioners did not at first confirm that relationship. Instead, Wetherell found that people with feminine characteristics--which includes both men and women--were more likely to practice and to prefer to practice the press agency and public information models (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

Further analysis of the data revealed, however, that femininity correlated with the practice of and preference for the two-way symmetrical model when the effect of the managerial role was controlled. Wetherell's study suggests that it is crucial for women to develop strategies for overcoming the discrimination and socialization that keeps them out of the managerial role if organizations are to use their feminine characteristics to enhance the excellence of their public relations program (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

In conclusion, research supports the idea that models of public relations vary among types of organizations and that they vary among programs within organizations. Research also reports that organizations practice the least excellent models, press agency and public information, more than the excellent model, two-way symmetrical public relations.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is based on the international study on "Excellence in Public Relations and Communications Management," conducted in 300 organizations in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The questionnaires were developed by researchers at the University of Maryland, Syracuse University, San Diego State University, and the Cranfield Institute of Technology in the U.K. It was a six-year study funded by the IABC Research Foundation of the International Association of Business Communicators.

For the purpose of this research, some of the questions were taken from the IABC questionnaire. For instance, questions related to the head of public relations department/communications, which dealt with identifying the strategic publics chosen for emphasis by the organization and the programs for these publics were taken. Questions related to the extent to which the four models of public relations have been used for each of the programs are included. The reporting relationship between the head of public relations department and senior management is a part of this questionnaire. It was decided not to take all the questions from the IABC study, because a pretest of the

first questionnaire draft showed a resistance on the part of respondents to answer a long questionnaire. Some questions relating to the size of the organization and communication department, use of public relations firms, and demographic data on the head of the public relations department were combined. The data collected for the IABC study comes from four questionnaires:

- (1) A telephone questionnaire for initial contact with the organization.
- (2) A 20-page questionnaire for the head of public relations or communications department.
- (3) A 7-page questionnaire for the CEO or senior manager close to the CEO.
- (4) A 6-page questionnaire for 20 employees chosen from different ranks of the organization.

For the purpose of this study only one questionnaire was sent to the vice presidents or managers of corporate communications/public relations departments of the largest 25 semiconductor companies in Santa Clara County. The list of these semiconductor companies was obtained from the San Jose Business Journal, Feb. 12, 1990 issue. These companies have been ranked by 1989 calendar year revenues. The names

of the heads of the corporate communications/public relations departments were obtained by telephoning these corporations, and getting the names. Santa Clara County includes the cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Mountain View, Milpitas, and Sunnyvale, among others.

Questionnaire Design

The typical attitude scale consists of a series of short but carefully formulated statements or propositions dealing with several selected aspects or many appropriate aspects of issues, institutions, or groups of people under consideration. The individual reacts verbally with expressions of approval or disapproval, agreement or disagreement to the items on the scale. These reactions purport to "measure" a person's position on controversial issues or problems or the degree to which existing social institutions are approved (Young, 1987).

For this questionnaire the Likert technique was used, which is also known as the "technique of summated ratings." According to Young (1987) this technique is similar to the Thurstone technique of equal-appearing intervals. In fact, the only important difference is in determination of scale construction, which is associated with Likert had been used previously in constructing personality scales. Besides being

the first one to apply the method of internal consistency to attitude measurement, Likert also emphasized the importance of each item as a scale in itself, made comparisons of the sigma and arbitrary methods of scoring, and compared the summated rating method with the Thurstone. The technique of summated ratings avoids the somewhat cumbersome procedure of having a group of judges sort the statements for the purpose of determining scale-values. It is alleged that the technique of summated ratings requires less labor and at the same time gives equally reliable, if not more reliable results, since the subjective influence of judges is eliminated.

Pre-Test Questionnaire

After the questionnaire was designed, it was sent to three public relations practitioners working in high-technology corporations. These executives felt that the questionnaire was too long, and needed to be concise. The feedback from pre-testing helped to make the questionnaire shorter, and the wording of some of the questions had to be changed. One executive also gave suggestions on how to improve the cover letter.

The pre-test questionnaire was about 25 pages, whereas the final questionnaire is 11 pages. Questions related to

the extent to which the organization has been pressured by activist groups and how the organization has organized for and responded.

Final Questionnaire

In the final questionnaire, changes were made after the pre-testing. In Part I and II of the questionnaire, choices of answers were decreased. In addition, some long statements were made shorter. The final questionnaire follows as Appendix B.

The Cover Letter

The cover letter enclosed with the final questionnaire was pre-tested, along with the pre-tested questionnaire. Respondents were promised anonymity. The cover letter follows as Appendix A.

Mailing

The final questionnaire, cover letter and self addressed envelope were mailed to the heads of the corporate communications/public relations/marketing communication departments of the top 25 semiconductor companies. The questionnaires were mailed on May 29, 1991. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it by June 17, 1991. However, a follow-up cover letter had to be

sent on June 26. The follow-up cover letter follows as Appendix C.

In the first mailing 15 questionnaires were returned, and in the second mailing 2 were received, for a total of 17 or a response rate of exactly 68%.

Limitations of the Study

This is a descriptive exploratory study, which profiles high-tech companies in Santa Clara County. However, the sample is small with only the 25 largest semiconductor corporations comprising the universe.

It is difficult to generalize findings from this data, because it is limited by the nature of organizations surveyed since they are all semiconductor corporations. The size of the organizations may also influence how they practice public relations. In addition, the sample was limited geographically, since it includes companies located in Santa Clara County.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Characteristics of Public Relations or Communication Programs

The strategic publics chosen for emphasis by the majority of the organizations in descending order of importance are the employees, media, stockholders/investors, government agencies, and customers/clients. However, these programs are also shared by other departments besides the public relations department. Programs for employees are shared by the personnel and human resource department. Similarly, for stockholders/investors, the finance, corporate, or the investor relations department coordinates the programs.

Programs for elected officials, activist groups, and labor organizations are mostly managed by other departments, such as government affairs, strategic planning, program management, personnel, and not by the public relations department.

While conducting a public relations program, most of the respondents believe that the purpose of programs is to develop mutual understanding between the organization and

the publics. This meets the characteristics of Grunig's symmetric model. In order to determine how effective a program has been in changing people's attitudes, the majority of the respondents would like to conduct research. But they are so busy writing news stories or producing publications that there is little or no time to do research.

As far as publicity is concerned, the majority of the respondents believes that the purpose of most programs is "quite simply to get publicity for the organization." The public relations or communication department basically attempts to get favorable publicity into the media and to keep unfavorable publicity out. In addition, the majority of the respondents agreed that they disseminated accurate information, but did not volunteer unfavorable information. This is typical of Grunig's public information model.

This study also shows that the top management, in most of the respondent organizations does not believe that public relations should provide mediation for the organization--to help management and publics negotiate conflict. This indicates that top management does not believe in Grunig's two-way symmetric model.

The extent to which each stage of the process of strategic management was followed for public relations

programs was seen in a number of items. The mean score for programs utilizing press releases, press conferences, or other contacts with the media was the highest at 4.82 on a 5 point scale. Also, the majority of respondents agreed that public relations personnel did provide management with information gathered through research. However, the research methods mentioned did not include interviewing a scientific sample of publics to check the effectiveness of the program, or using the services of public opinion research agencies.

The criterion used by most public relations departments to evaluate the effectiveness of the program is "increase in product sales," with the highest score of 4.17 on a 5 point scale. Compilation of positive media coverage by news clippings is the second most important criterion used for measuring effectiveness of public relations programs, with a mean score of 4.11 on a 5 point scale. The willingness of activist groups to negotiate was not considered important as a criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of a program, since it had the lowest mean score of 1.5.

Table 1 represents criteria used by organizations for measuring effectiveness of public relations programs

Table 1

Total and Mean Scores of Criteria for Measuring
Effectiveness of Public Relations Programs

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Products sales increased	0	1	2	7	7	0	4.17
Compilation of positive media	1	0	3	5	8	0	4.11
Program helped make money	1	1	4	5	6	0	3.82
Program saved money	1	4	3	4	4	1	3.37
Publics changed its behavior	2	1	7	5	2	0	3.23
Greater cooperation with public	2	2	5	7	1	0	3.17
Fewer disagreements with publics	4	4	5	2	2	0	2.64
Complaints from publics reduced	4	4	4	2	2	1	2.56
Desirable legislation passed	10	1	2	3	0	1	1.87
Less interference by government	12	1	2	2	0	0	1.64
Activist groups willing to negotiate	12	1	2	1	0	1	1.50

Note. N (1) = Never, O (2) = Occasionally, R (3) = Regularly, M (4) = Most of the time, A (5) = Always, NR = No Response.

Characteristics of Public Relations or Communication
Department

Reporting Relationship

This study shows that 62.5% of the respondents do not report directly to the most senior manager in the company, while only 37.5% do report directly. The majority of the respondents agreed that an indirect reporting exists from the public relations department to the most senior manager. Only one respondent agreed that the public relations department reports to a senior manager who in turn reports to the most senior manager.

Respondents say that mostly the public relations departments are busy making contacts with people outside the organization, such as the media. The mean score of this contribution is the highest at 4.17 on a 5 point scale. The respondents also say that involvement in overall corporate strategic planning for the organization is low with a mean score of 2.82 out of 5 points.

Table 2 shows "contributions" that a public relations department might make to the entire organization, in descending rank order.

Table 2

Total and Mean Score Indicating Level of Contribution by
Public Relations Department to Organization

	<u>NC</u>	<u>SC</u>	<u>AC</u>	<u>GC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Contacts with knowledgeable people	0	0	5	4	8	0	4.17
Judgment based on experience	0	0	5	6	6	0	4.05
Routine operations	0	2	4	3	7	1	3.93
Informal approaches to gathering information	1	0	9	5	2	0	3.41
Specific research conducted to answer specific questions	1	5	4	6	1	0	3.05
Response to major social causes	4	1	5	6	1	0	2.94
Regularly conducted research activities	1	4	9	2	1	0	2.94
Formal approaches to gathering information	1	3	10	3	0	0	2.88
Strategic Planning	2	5	4	6	0	0	2.82

Note. NC (1) = No Contribution, SC (2) = Some Contribution, AC (3) = Average Contribution, GC (4) = Good Contribution, EC (5) = Excellent Contribution, NR = No Response.

Power structure

Today's organizations are so complex that many of them require more than a single leader to operate effectively.

Instead of a single powerful person, then, many organizations are controlled by a group of powerful people--often called the "dominant coalition."

This study indicates that there is more than one leader in every organization; therefore, the percentage of responses is more than 100%. Among the responses, 94.12% checked the chief executive officer as one of the powerful persons in their respective organization. The second most powerful person to form the dominant coalition was the chief financial officer (82.35%). The head of human resources was at the bottom of the power structure, with only 17.65% respondents checking it. The percentage of respondents who believed that the head of public relations, public affairs, or communication were part of this power elite was only 35.29%. Other managers specified by few respondents were the chief technical officer, vice president of manufacturing, general manager of component group, and others.

According to Grunig (1990), public relations departments have more potential if they are headed by a manager rather than a technician; if practitioners in the department--especially the senior person--have training and knowledge of the two-way symmetrical model. The research reported in Grunig and Grunig (1989) supports the proposition that the greater the potential of the public

relations department, the more likely it will be that the senior person in the department will be in the dominant coalition and the more likely that the organization will practice the two-way symmetrical model.

The extent to which the "dominant coalition" or power elite support public relations and the communications function of the organization varied from "average" to "excellent." Among the 17 respondents six believed that the power elite support was excellent (35.30%). Five respondents said the support was average (29.41%). None of the respondents said there was no support at all from the power elite for the public relations and communications function of the organization.

In general, 41.17% of the respondents felt that "average" clearance was required for the programs and activities in their department (on a scale of minimal clearance to extensive clearance required). This was because most of the time the respondents said they seek informal approval for a project, since they believed it was "prudent operating procedure" in their organization. Other reasons given were, they voluntarily submit their writing to a clearance process to avoid mistakes, and most of what they write has to be cleared.

The nature of project/activity which needed "above average" clearance were "sensitive" information, crisis communication, financial information, major projects (in terms of expenditure), and statements with political ramifications. Table 3 shows types of projects which need clearance from top management.

Marketing Communications vs Public Affairs

This study indicates that 87.5% of the organizations do not have two separate units, one for marketing related public relations and another for public affairs/public policy. Only 12.5% of the organizations surveyed have two separate departments.

The dominant coalition or the senior administrators give more support to marketing related public relations (76.48%), and 11.76% of the respondents said equal support was given to public affairs and marketing related public relations. As far as the budget goes, the majority of the respondents felt that marketing related public relations has the larger budget.

Table 3

Total and Mean Scores of Projects Needing Clearance

<u>Projects</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>SC</u>	<u>AC</u>	<u>AAC</u>	<u>EC</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>Mean</u>
"Sensitive" information	1	0	0	6	10	0	4.41
Crisis communication	1	0	1	4	10	1	4.37
Financial information	1	0	2	5	9	0	4.23
Statements with political ramifications	0	1	2	5	7	2	4.20
Statements about top administrators	1	0	1	7	6	2	4.13
Major projects	0	0	4	7	6	0	4.11
Statements with direct quotes	0	2	3	8	4	0	3.82
Statements involving numbers	2	2	0	8	5	0	3.70
New Projects	1	4	5	3	3	1	3.18

Note. NC (1) = No Clearance, SC (2) = Some Clearance, AC (3) = Average Clearance, AAC (4) = Above Average Clearance, EC (5) = Extensive Clearance NR = No Response.

Role of Head of Public Relations

The head of public relations performs several roles. The most frequently done (average score of 2.88 on a 3 point scale), is maintaining media contacts for the organization, and keep others in the organization informed of what the media has reported about the organization. Writing

communication materials, counseling management, and placing news releases are some of the other roles performed by the head of the public relations department to a lesser extent. Creating opportunities for management to hear the views of various internal and external publics seems to be the least important job performed by the head, with the lowest mean score of 1.88 on a 3 point scale.

Table 4 presents items which describe the work of a public relations practitioner.

Table 4

Total and Mean Scores of Roles of Public Relations

Practitioner

<u>Roles</u>	<u>PD</u>	<u>AD</u>	<u>GD</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Maintain media contacts	1	0	16	0	2.88
Keep others informed of media reports	0	2	15	0	2.88
Place news releases	1	1	15	0	2.82
Write communication materials	0	3	14	0	2.82
Give suggestions to decision makers	0	3	14	0	2.82
Take responsibility for company's communication program	0	4	13	0	2.76
Be accountable for public relations programs	0	5	12	0	2.70

(Table 4 continued)

	<u>PD</u>	<u>AD</u>	<u>GD</u>	<u>NR</u>	<u>Mean</u>
Counsel decision makers	2	4	11	0	2.52
Use journalistic skills to place newsworthy articles	2	4	11	0	2.52
Represent company at events	1	7	9	0	2.47
Edit others documents	5	1	11	0	2.35
Take communication policy decision	1	9	6	1	2.31
Do graphics for communication material	4	4	9	0	2.29
Produce publications	5	2	10	0	2.29
Create opportunities for management to hear views of publics	6	7	4	0	1.88

Note. PD (1) = Poor Description, AD (2) = Average Description, GD (3) = Good Description, NR = No Response.

Use of Public Relations Firms

This study indicates that half of the corporations use the services of an outside public relations firm, while the other half did not. Among the 17 respondents, eight said they used the services of outside public relations firm, while eight said they did not. There was no response from one of the respondents.

In order to indicate the type of activities that the public relations department purchased from the outside public relations firm, the respondents were asked to indicate it in percentage from 0% to 100%. Research in support of the public relations function is a service that is purchased from outside public relations firms. Nine respondents said that they hired public relations firms to do research between 0%-20% of the time, one respondent said 21%-40% of the time, three respondents said 41%-60% of the time, and two said 81%-100% of the time. There was no response from two respondents, and none of the respondents checked between 61%-80%. Preparation and placement of publicity and advertising materials is yet another type of public relations activity that the majority of public relations departments purchase from outside firms. Seven respondents checked between 0%-20%, three checked between 21%-40%, four said between 41%-60%, one respondent checked between 61%-80%, and two checked between 81%-100%.

This clearly indicates that public relations departments in organizations use public relations firms primarily for media preparation and placement. These organizations do not consult outside public relations firms often about relations with the news media during a potential controversy or dispute, since 11 respondents checked between 0%-20%, and three said between 21%-40%. None of the

respondents checked between 41%-100%. It means that the public relations departments prefer to handle such delicate matters on their own rather than going outside for advice.

Size of Organization & Communication Department

The average number of people employed in the organizations surveyed are 704.

The average number of full-time public relations or communication professionals employed by the surveyed organizations are five. Out of these two are males and three females. The percentage of women working in these departments is higher than men (61.29% women, and 38.71% men).

The majority of top positions in public relations/communications departments are held by men. Of the 17 respondents, 11 were male and 6 were female (64.71% male, 35.29% female). This study shows that public relations practitioners as managers or vice presidents fall mostly in the age group of 36-45 (52.94%).

Table 5 shows respondents according to age and sex.

Education and Title

Several studies have found positive correlation between the extent to which the top public relations person has formal education in public relations and the extent to which the organization practices the two-way models, especially the two-way symmetrical model, and the negative correlations with the other models (Grunig & Grunig, 1990).

Table 5

Age-Sex Breakdown of Respondents

	Men %	Women	%
	(N=11)	(N=6)	
25-35 years	1 9.09%	3	50%
36-45 years	6 54.54%	3	50%
46-55 years	3 27.28%	0	0%
Over 56 years	<u>1 9.09%</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
	11 100%	6	100%

Of the 17 respondents eight (47%) had a bachelor's degree. Many of these respondents have taken graduate courses. Only one respondent had a doctoral degree, and three had a master's degree. Liberal arts/humanities, and business were chosen by most respondents (35.30%) as their undergraduate major. It is interesting to note that there

are two respondents who have a degree in engineering, and are practicing public relations/communications.

Title of positions varied from one organization to another, as well as according to job descriptions. The majority of respondents gave their title as manager of marketing communications. This shows that marketing communications seems to be the primary focus of public relations activities of these organizations. Other titles of respondents were public relations manager, director corporate communication, vice president marketing and sales, treasurer, vice president worldwide communication, and others. In the organizational chart, the majority of the communications managers ranked third in level of seniority, following vice president and director.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Summary

To determine whether high-tech organizations are practicing excellence in public relations according to Grunig's typology of public relations, the top 25 semiconductor companies in Santa Clara County, ranked by annual sales, were surveyed. Likert scales were used to formulate the questionnaire. Most of the questions were derived from the IABC study on "Excellence in Public Relations and Communications Management." Previous studies have predicted that these high-tech organizations should fall into the mixed mechanical organic type of organization, which have a need for a large, comprehensive public relations program that reaches outside the organization itself. Such organizations according to the IABC research are most likely to practice what Grunig defines as two-way symmetrical communications. However, this study does not support this theory.

In fact the results of this study yield fairly strong evidence that the sample organizations are not practicing sophisticated public relations according to Grunig's models. One possible reason is that these companies are still

maturing in organizational development, and they are struggling to survive in a highly competitive market. Most of these semiconductor companies are less than 20 years old and have not really matured in communications aspects. Presently, these high-tech companies are primarily emphasizing sales and marketing. Once they are older and become more stable in terms of market share, perhaps these companies will also invest in community relations and other public relations programs.

Characteristics of Excellent Public Relations Department

The theory and research reviewed in this study showed, in summary, that the most effective public relations programs are those that are based on strategic management and the two-way symmetrical model of public relations. The IABC research team identified characteristics for practicing strategic, two-way symmetrical public relations. These characteristics are (Grunig, 1988):

Public Relations Roles: Public relations departments have greater potential if they include communication managers who conceptualize and direct public relations programs as well as communication technicians who provide technical services such as writing, editing, photography, media contacts, or production of publications. The results of this study show

that the majority of the public relations/communication departments are headed by technicians, and not by a person who can perform the role of communication manager.

Equal Treatment of Women and Men: The feminization occurring in the public relations profession will limit the potential of a public relations department if the organization discriminates against women and keeps them out of the management role. Excellent public relations departments have women in management roles and have mechanisms to help women gain the power they need to advance from the technician to the management role. As far as the treatment of women is concerned, the majority of the organizations surveyed do not have women as head of the public relations/communications departments.

Academic Preparation and Experience: Excellent public relations departments have practitioners who have learned the theoretical body of knowledge that is now developing in public relations. Evidence from this study indicates that majority of the respondents do not have a good knowledge and understanding of public relations theory. The majority of respondents have a bachelor's degree, with liberal arts/humanities as their undergraduate major. Most of the respondents, it seems, have gained knowledge of public relations from experience, self study, or professional

development courses, instead of formal, academic training in public relations and organizational communications.

Organization of Public Relations Function: Many organizations splinter the public relations function into a supporting function for other departments such as marketing, finance, or personnel. In addition, many single public relations departments have developed historically rather than strategically, reflecting the preference of the dominant coalition when the public relations function first developed. In contrast, our literature review showed that excellent departments:

- (i) Locate the public relations department in the organizational structure so that the department has ready access to senior managers.
- (ii) Integrate all public relations functions into a single department rather than subordinate them under other departments. Only in an integrated department is it possible for public relations to be managed strategically.
- (iii) Develop dynamic horizontal structures within the public relations department, making it possible to reassign people and resources to new programs as new strategic publics arise and others pass.

According to Grunig (1988) one of the characteristics of an excellent public relations department is that it plays a supporting function for other departments such as marketing, finance, or personnel. This is not seen in the majority of the organizations surveyed in this study. In fact, the study shows that the senior administrators give more support to marketing related public relations. Also, the majority of the respondents do not report to the most senior manager in the company.

Table 6 shows how these semiconductor companies rate on each of the criteria identified by Grunig.

Table 6

Characteristics of Excellent Public Relations Department

<u>Characteristics</u>	<u>Poor/Average/Good</u>
Public relations roles	Average
Equal treatment of women and men	Poor
Academic preparation and experience	Poor
Organization of public relations function	Poor

According to Grunig, organizations should practice two-way and symmetrical communication when their environments are complex and turbulent; many organizations with such environments, such as the top 25 semiconductor corporations

do not practice public relations in the way Grunig's theory predicts. CEOs of excellent organizations surveyed as part of Grunig's study highly value communication and believe it should be practiced essentially as spelled out by the research team's theory of excellence. That is, they want communication that is strategic, based on research, and that involves two-way communication with key publics. Yet they report that they do not always get this excellent communication from their departments (Grunig, 1992).

In addition, this study indicates that the majority of public relations departments strive to manipulate the media agenda by releasing only what they consider to be most persuasive information, and they generate conflict with journalists if the journalists want to report other information. This is a typical characteristic of the two-way asymmetric model of public relations.

As far as the power structure is concerned, only one-third of the respondents believe that the head of public relations, public affairs, or communication departments are part of the dominant coalition. Organizations choose public relations programs because the people with power in the organization choose them. When the public relations department has little potential, programs are chosen by dominant coalitions with little understanding of modern,

sophisticated public relations. Therefore, two concepts affect who comes to power: organizational culture and the potential of the public relations department.

Apparently, the root of the problem is the top communicator's lack of knowledge about evaluation research, segmentation of publics, and environmental scanning. There is a shortage of communicators with mastery of the attitude, negotiation, and conflict resolution theories vital to the win-win outcomes that CEOs seek in the majority of these high-tech organizations.

The knowledge of the top communicator, translated into power in the organization can make the difference (Grunig, 1992). In other words, a top communicator who provides value to members of the dominant coalition in the organization through his or her practice of excellent communication, can achieve power in the organization. This personal power, according to Grunig, in turn enables the communicator to continue to practice excellent communication, even in a mediocre organization.

According to researchers of the IABC study, many communication departments fail to achieve their potential for excellence, and this prevents them from enjoying the enhanced support they would otherwise receive from their

CEOs. A primary problem, as found in this study, is that the top communicator is not a strategic manager but rather is involved in more routine functions, such as managing people and developing budgets. Furthermore, communicators in general do not understand how to use research and two-way symmetrical models of communication to create win-win outcomes with key publics.

Consequently, communicators are not qualified to make top level contributions to strategic planning for the organization, or to provide appropriate counsel to CEOs, managing people and developing budgets. Furthermore, communicators in general do not understand how to use research and two-way symmetrical models of communication to create win-win outcomes with key publics. In other words, communicators are not qualified to make top level contributions to strategic planning for the organization, or to provide appropriate counsel to CEOs.

The answer, Grunig (1992) suggests, is a reassessment of the role of communication in organizations, and increased professional development through master's degree programs in public relations and communication, professional development programs, and reading of professional literature.

Future Recommendations

There needs to be more theory-based public relations research that focuses on management perceptions and the linkage between public relations professionals and members of the dominant coalition. More research is needed to determine how members of the dominant coalition perceive what is right and wrong for an organization, and how these guidelines affect the practice of public relations. In addition, further studies should focus attention on factors which can affect the perceptions of members of the dominant coalition, and how these perceptions affect the practice of public relations.

Future research studies can concentrate on the hypothesis that the marketing communications emphasis tends to decrease in importance as companies mature in age, become more successful, and establish a niche in the marketplace. In other words, perhaps future research studies should focus on the fact that when a high technology company begins to approach public relations in more sophisticated ways, will they begin to think of broader-based publics than just the media or potential customers?

Another recommendation for further research is to study the extent to which organizations have been pressured by activist groups and how these organizations have organized and responded to this pressure. Treatment of women in organizations and communication departments is a final recommendation for further research.

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Appendix

APPENDIX A
SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student of mass communications at San Jose State University. As a part of my degree program, I am working on my thesis, the title of which is "Semiconductor Companies & Excellence in Communications." Your organization is one of the top 25 semiconductor companies in the Silicon Valley which is a part of this study. Your participation is very important for the success of this study. Dr. Dennis Wilcox is the thesis advisor, and if you have any questions, you can contact him at (408) 924-3268.

This study is based on the international survey conducted by the IABC Research Foundation of the International Association of Business Communicators. The questionnaire for the international survey was developed by researchers at the University of Maryland, Syracuse University, San Diego State University, and the Cranfield Institute of Technology in the United Kingdom.

By completing this questionnaire, you will help to determine the contribution that public relations and communication make to the success of an organization. You will also help to determine how communication programs should be organized and managed to make the greatest contribution to the bottom line. I realize the questionnaire is long, but pre-test has indicated it takes about 15-20 minutes to complete it.

I will really appreciate your help. Please complete this questionnaire by June 22, and mail it in the self addressed stamped envelope. Thank you, in advance for your cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

(Pragati Grover)
c/o Dr. Dennis Wilcox
Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communications
San Jose State University
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0055

Appendix B

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I

Characteristics of Public Relations or Communication
Programs

1. Listed below are publics for which organizations often have public relations programs. Please indicate what communications are managed and coordinated by your department. If the program is handled/shared by another department, please name that department.

Publics	Yes	No	Another Department (Give Name)
Employees	_____	_____	_____
Media	_____	_____	_____
Stockholders/investors	_____	_____	_____
Community	_____	_____	_____
Government agencies	_____	_____	_____
Elected officials	_____	_____	_____
Customers/clients	_____	_____	_____
Activist groups	_____	_____	_____
Labor organizations	_____	_____	_____
Other (Please specify)	_____	_____	_____

2. The following is a list of statements about how public relations programs could be conducted. Please indicate your level of "agreement" with how well each statement describes your department. "1" is "not at all" and "5" is "very well."

The purpose of most programs is, quite simply, to get publicity for the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
We usually conduct research to determine how effective a program has been in changing people's attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5
For most programs, nearly everyone is so busy writing news stories or producing publications that there is no time to do research.	1	2	3	4	5
Our broad goal is to persuade publics to behave as the organization wants them to behave.	1	2	3	4	5
The purpose of programs are to develop mutual understanding between the management of the organization and publics.	1	2	3	4	5
Before starting a program, we look at attitude surveys to make sure we describe the organization's policies in ways our publics will most likely accept.	1	2	3	4	5
We disseminate accurate information but do not volunteer unfavorable information.	1	2	3	4	5
Before starting a program, we do surveys or informal research to find out how much management and our publics understand each other.	1	2	3	4	5
We mostly attempt to get favorable publicity into the media and to keep unfavorable publicity out.	1	2	3	4	5
We determine how successful a program is from the number of people who attend an event or who use our products or services.	1	2	3	4	5
For most programs, public relations and publicity mean essentially the same thing.	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping a clipping file is about the only method we use to determine the success of a program.	1	2	3	4	5

Top management believes public relations should provide mediation for the organization--to help management and publics negotiate conflict. 1 2 3 4 5

Public relations is a disseminator of information than an advocate for the organization. 1 2 3 4 5

3. Each of the following describes a possible objective for a public relations activity. Estimate on a scale of 1 to 5 how often your department uses the following "objectives." "1" indicates "rarely," and "5" is "always."

Placing articles in the news media. 1 2 3 4 5

Making certain that people are exposed to a message in the media. 1 2 3 4 5

Getting the target public to remember the message. 1 2 3 4 5

Getting the target public to believe the message. 1 2 3 4 5

Creating or maintaining a favorable attitude by the target public. 1 2 3 4 5

Changing or maintaining the behavior of the target public. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Here is a list of activities that can be used in planning and implementing public relations programs. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1= not used at all, 2 = used sometimes, 3 = used regularly, 4 = used quite a bit, 5 = always used), please indicate how much these activities are used in your department.

Review management decisions to track public relations ramifications. 1 2 3 4 5

Phone calls are made to members of target publics to keep in touch. 1 2 3 4 5

In-depth interviews are conducted with members of the organization's publics. 1 2 3 4 5

After the organization conducts special events, reactions of attendees are sought. 1 2 3 4 5

The services of public opinion research agencies are used.	1	2	3	4	5
Demographic data are used to help make decisions concerning publics.	1	2	3	4	5
Complaints are reviewed to find out how publics feel about the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Focus groups are used to research the target public.	1	2	3	4	5
A crisis communication plan exists in the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Public relations programs are developed and reviewed through a formal planning process.	1	2	3	4	5
Public relations programs have written objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
Management by Objectives (MBO) is utilized in most programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Programs utilize press releases, press conferences, or other contacts with the media.	1	2	3	4	5
Programs use special events, tours, or open houses.	1	2	3	4	5
Contacts are made with government officials in public relations programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Public relations personnel provide management with information gained through programs.	1	2	3	4	5
The effectiveness of programs is checked by interviewing a scientific sample of publics.	1	2	3	4	5
Communication effectiveness is measured by comparing pre-program and afterprogram changes in public opinion.	1	2	3	4	5
5. A number of criteria are listed for evaluating the effectiveness of public relations programs. On a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate what criteria are used by your					

department. (1= never, 2= occasionally, 3= regularly, 4= most of the time, 5= always.)

Compilation of positive media coverage.	1	2	3	4	5
Complaints from publics were reduced.	1	2	3	4	5
There were fewer disagreements and disputes with the relevant public.	1	2	3	4	5
There was greater cooperation between the organization and the relevant public.	1	2	3	4	5
The relevant public changed its behavior in the way the organization wanted.	1	2	3	4	5
Product sales or use of the organization's services increased.	1	2	3	4	5
There was less interference by government in the management of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Activist groups were willing to negotiate with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
Desirable legislation was passed or undesirable legislation was defeated.	1	2	3	4	5
The program helped the organization make money.	1	2	3	4	5
The program saved money for the organization.	1	2	3	4	5
The rest of the questionnaire consists of questions about the overall public relations department that you manage in this organization.					

PART II

Characteristics of the Public Relations or Communication Department

The first series of questions in Part II asks about your relationship, as head of a public relations or communication department, to senior management.

6. Does your public relations department report directly to the most senior manager in your company? _____ Yes _____ No

(Go to Q9) (Go to Q7)

7. (If your answer to Q6 was no) Does an indirect reporting relationship exist, then, from the public relations department to the most senior manager (for example, in which the department reports directly on some matters but not all)? _____ Yes _____ No

(Go to Q9) (Go to Q8)

8. (If there is no direct or indirect reporting relationship to the senior manager) Does the department report, then, to:

A senior manager who in turn reports to the most senior manager? _____ Yes _____ No

A more junior level of management? _____ Yes _____ No

9. Listed below are "contributions" that a public relations department might make to the entire organization. On a scale of 1 to 5, indicate what level of contribution you think your department makes on the following statements. (1= no contribution, 2= some contribution, 3= average contribution, 4= good contribution, 5= excellent contribution.)

Strategic planning.	1	2	3	4	5
Response to major social issues.	1	2	3	4	5
Routine operations (e.g., development and maintenance of employee communication, or community relations programs)	1	2	3	4	5
Regularly conducted and routine research activities.	1	2	3	4	5

Specific research conducted to answer specific questions. 1 2 3 4 5

Formal approaches to gathering information for use in decision making other than research. 1 2 3 4 5

Informal approaches to gathering information. 1 2 3 4 5

Contacts with knowledgeable people outside the organization. 1 2 3 4 5

Judgment based on experience. 1 2 3 4 5

10. Today's organizations are so complex that many of them require more than a single leader to operate effectively. Instead of a single powerful person, then, many organizations are controlled by a group of powerful people--often called the "dominant coalition." In your organization, who is represented in this power elite? Please check all that apply

_____ The chief executive officer.

_____ The chief financial officer.

_____ The chief operating officer.

_____ The head of public relations, public affairs, or communication.

_____ The head of marketing services

_____ The head of legal services

_____ The head of human resources

_____ The head of engineering

Other manager specified below.

11. To what extent does the "dominant coalition" or power elite in your organization support public relations and the communications function of the organization.

_____ Not at all

_____ Below average

_____ Average

_____ Above average

_____ Excellent

12. In general, how would you characterize the approval process in your organization for the programs and activities of your department.

_____ Minimal clearance procedures

_____ Average clearance procedures

_____ Above average clearance procedures

_____ Extensive clearance needed

13. Please check any of the following reasons that help to explain why you answered the previous question as you did.

_____ I believe I can make final decisions fairly autonomously.

____ I usually seek informal approval for a project because I believe that is prudent operating procedure in this organization.

____ I voluntarily submit my writing to a clearance process to avoid mistakes.

____ I voluntarily submit my activities to a clearance process as a courtesy.

____ I voluntarily submit my activities to a clearance process as a way of keeping top management informed.

____ Some decisions are autonomous but most decisions are taken to the boss for his or her okay.

____ Although my press releases and projects do not require formal clearance, anyone up the ladder can change them or say "no way."

____ Most of what I write has to be cleared.

____ The clearance process here depends on who is in power at the time; some top administrators require more clearance than others.

14. Clearance from top management often depends on the nature of the project/activity. Listed below are some types of projects. Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 what level of clearance is needed. (1= no clearance, 2= some clearance, 3= average clearance, 4= above average clearance, 5= extensive clearance.)

New projects.	1	2	3	4	5
Major projects (in terms of expenditure).	1	2	3	4	5
Statements, oral or written, that involve numbers.	1	2	3	4	5
Financial information.	1	2	3	4	5
Crisis communications.	1	2	3	4	5
Statements that include direct quotes.	1	2	3	4	5
Statements with political ramifications.	1	2	3	4	5
"Sensitive" information.	1	2	3	4	5
Statements about top administrators.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Does your organization have two separate units, one for marketing-related public relations and another for public affairs (public policy)?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 50px; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div>Yes</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 50px; margin-right: 10px;"></div> <div>No</div> </div>				

16. Which unit has the larger budget?

_____ Marketing-related public relations.

_____ Public affairs.

_____ Budgets are approximately the same.

17. Regardless of whether you have separate units, which function--public affairs or marketing-related public relations--receives more support from senior administrators--the dominant coalition?

_____ Marketing-related public relations.

_____ Public affairs.

_____ Approximately equal support.

18. On a scale of 1 to 3, please indicate how well each of the following items describes the work that you do as a

public relations practitioner. (1= Poor description, 2= Average description, 3= Good description)

Produce brochures, pamphlets, and other publications.	1	2	3
Create opportunities for management to hear the views of various internal and external publics.	1	2	3
Take responsibility for the success or failure of my organization's communication or public relations programs.	1	2	3
Write communication materials.	1	2	3
Represent the organization at events and meetings.	1	2	3
Maintain media contacts for the organization.	1	2	3
Take communication policy decisions.	1	2	3
Observe that others in the organization hold me accountable for the success or failure of public relations programs.	1	2	3
Keep others in the organization informed of what the media report about our organization and important issues.	1	2	3
Provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans.	1	2	3
Do photography and graphics for communication or public relations materials.	1	2	3
Responsible for placing news releases.	1	2	3
Edit or rewrite for grammar and spelling the materials written by others in the organization.	1	2	3
Counsel top decision makers when communication or public relations issues are involved.	1	2	3

Use journalistic skills to figure out what 1 2 3
the media will consider newsworthy about
our organization.

19. Approximately how many people are employed by your
organization? _____

20. Approximately how many full-time public relations or
communication professionals are employed by your department?

_____ Number of men

_____ Number of women

21. Does your department or organization use the services of
outside public relations firms?

_____ Yes

_____ No

22. Please indicate the percentage of the following types of
public relations activities that your department or
organization purchases from outside public relations firms?

Preparation and placement of publicity and advertising
materials. _____%

Preparation of publications directed to employees,
stockholders, investors, and similar publics. _____%

Consulting about relations with the news media during
periods of actual or potential controversy or disputes.

_____%

Consulting about top-level strategic problems related to the relationship this organization has with outside organizations or groups. _____%

Research in support of the public relations function. _____%

23. You are:

_____ Male

_____ Female

24. Your age is:

(i) 25-35 (ii) 36-45 (iii) 46-55 (iv) Over 56

25. Your highest level of education in any field is:

_____ Some college

_____ A bachelor's degree

_____ Some graduate courses

_____ A master's degree

_____ A doctoral degree

26. What best describes your undergraduate major:

_____ Journalism

_____ Mass Communications

_____ Public Relations

_____ Liberal Arts/Humanities

_____ Business

_____ Other (please specify) _____

27. The title of your position is: _____

That completes the questionnaire. Thank You.

Please mail this questionnaire in the self addressed stamped envelope to:

Pragati Grover
c/o Dr. Dennis Wilcox
Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communications
San Jose State University
One Washington Square
San Jose, Ca 95192

Appendix C

FOLLOW-UP COVER LETTER

Dear _____:

I am a graduate student of mass communications at San Jose State University. I recently send you a questionnaire, as part of my thesis.

The topic of my thesis is, "Semiconductor Companies & Excellence in Communications." Your organization is one of the top 25 semiconductor companies in the Silicon Valley which is a part of this thesis. So far I have received 15 questionnaires in the mail. I do not know who has send it, and who hasn't. In case you have send it, please ignore this letter. If you have not mailed the questionnaire, please do it at your earliest. The success of this study depends on your participation.

If you need another copy of the questionnaire, please call me at (408) 238-1870. I will be happy to mail you another one.

I would also like to thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Yours Sincerely,

(Pragati Grover)
c/o Dr. Dennis Wilcox
Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communications
San Jose State University
One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0055